

# Saipan Tribune

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## I N S I D E



### Cost of Frances

Hurricanes Charley and Frances dealt Florida a one-two punch that ravaged citrus groves and ground the state's most important industry to a halt by keeping tourists away from its sandy beaches and fantasy-filled theme parks.

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### Russia in Grief

Funeral processions snaked through the streets of this grief-stricken town as Russians began to bury victims of the terror attack on a school that left more than 350 people dead.

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### Value in Imports

It seems that, in America, car buyers are sticking with the assumption that foreign manufacturers offer more for the money.

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## Govt tried to grant foreign students jobs in CNMI

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

The Attorney General's Office tried to allow foreign students to work in the CNMI but eventually dropped the plan because it would be inconsistent with another law, acting immigration director Antonio P. Sablan said in his testimony in federal court Friday.

According to Sablan the Attorney Gen-

eral's Office, which oversees the immigration division, drafted an emergency regulation that would allow foreign students to come in and work in the Commonwealth.

He said he was personally against the plan, which was introduced in early August 2003, because it was contrary to the existing regulation.

At the same time, he said that it would pose a big immigration problem for the CNMI.

During direct examination by assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick Smith, Sablan also cited the CNMI's moratorium on the entry of new foreign workers for certain job categories.

"The CNMI government needs to control the flow of foreign workers...it (proposed amendment) died early," said Sablan.

Sablan claimed that the proposed plan was not discussed with Saipan University representatives who at that time were actively pursuing to get student permits for a study and work program.

SU founder Soon Kyung Park is currently on trial at U.S. District Court for alleged fraudulent acts in connection with his operation of SU.

Sablan said that almost all institutions offering a post secondary education such as the Northern Marianas College,

See GOVT on Page 12

## 'Fate of Saipan casino hinges on Guam vote'

By AGNES E. DONATO  
REPORTER

Saipan may be pressured to pass its own casino gaming law if voters approve an initiative that would legalize controlled casino gambling on Guam this November, according to a Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino executive.

Tinian Dynasty general manager Tom Liu said that at this time, he does not see a casino industry on Guam having a major impact on the operations of the CNMI's only casino gaming facility.

The Tinian Dynasty primarily targets the Chinese tourism market, who Liu noted could not visit and gamble on Guam without a U.S. visa. Tinian's advantage over Guam lies on the CNMI's more relaxed immigration policy, as well as its direct charter flights from China, he said.

Liu, however, expects to get a clearer picture of the impact of a Guam casino industry once Saipan decides to legalize casino gambling.

"Realistically, if Guam passes a casino gaming law, Saipan has no choice but to pass its own. A casino industry on Guam will cause definite disadvantage to Saipan, because both islands are competing for the Japanese and Korean markets," Liu noted.

Japanese and Korean citizens or nationals are eligible for Guam's visa waivers.

"If Saipan starts to open casinos, Tinian can close down. Tinian can't compete

See FATE on Page 12



### LABOR DAY FUN

Two and half-year old Ryan Tudela Bondoc (holding a pail) is among the many children who enjoyed the sun, sand, and the sea at Pau Pau Beach in Marpi during Labor Day.

LIBERTY DONES

## Food, water supply to be shipped to Northern Islands today

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

Relief for residents of Agrihan and Alamagan would arrive soon, with the Emergency Management Office scheduled to ship food and water supplies to those islands early morning today.

The M/V Tenshou II—loaded with food, water, tents, tarps, cots, blankets and other relief items—would leave Saipan about 6am today, EMO director Rudolfo Pua said yesterday.

The boat detoured back to Saipan,

where it arrived about 11pm Sunday night due to tropical storm Sarika that approached the Northern Islands.

The EMO had planned on sending relief items to Agrihan and Alamagan to avert looming food and water supply shortages after Supertyphoon Songda severely battered the two islands and Pagan.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta cleared the three northern islands yesterday morning from his storm condition declaration, as Sarika moved away from the islands.

As of 7am yesterday, Sarika brunched 70mph-strong winds as it moved

westerly at 17mph. At this time, the National Weather Service located the storm's center at about 140 miles west-northwest of Agrihan, 165 miles west-northwest of Pagan, and 185 miles northwest of Alamagan. The governor declared an "all clear" condition for these islands over an hour later.

Pua said the governor would travel to those islands sometime this week to personally assess the damage brought on by supertyphoon Songda and storm Sarika.

Pua said the EMO has yet to receive

See FOOD on Page 12

## Toiling hard on Labor Day

Thirty-two-year-old Rudolfo Fajardo, a security guard, was supposed to have his day-off from work yesterday when his office called him up to augment manpower.

Minutes later, Fajardo eagerly

See TOILING on Page 12





# Local

## 47 evacuees still at govt shelters

More than two weeks after the onslaught of supertyphoon Chaba, some 47 evacuees displaced from homes remain at government shelters.

About 19 people stayed at the Ada gymnasium on Saipan yesterday morning, while some 28 others were at the Rota Aging Center, the Emergency Management Office said.

EMO director Rudolfo Pua said most of the evacuees on Saipan have flooded homes,

forcing them to extend their stay at the government shelter despite plans to send all evacuees home by last Saturday.

"We cannot close the shelters until they go back home," Pua said. "We'll try to find ways to assist them to go back to their homes."

Right after Chaba hit the islands, the number of evacuees in government shelters reached over a thousand. The number began going down last week, as the Public School System

wanted to as soon as possible reopen schools that were used as temporary shelters.

The Emergency Operations Center reported that many evacuees also went home after receiving relief items such as tents, tarps, cots, and blankets.

Government agency representatives to the EOC took time off yesterday, as the nation celebrated Labor Day. Pua said the EOC would resume normal operations today. *(John Ravelo)*



JOHN RAVELO

Representatives of the Federal Emergency Management Agency hold on to their post at the FEMA's Disaster Recovery Center at the multi-purpose center in Susupe, Saipan, even as the nation celebrates Labor Day.

## Man charged with domestic abuse

A man is facing criminal charges for allegedly physically assaulting his girlfriend while discussing their plans for the future over a month ago.

The Attorney General's Office filed two counts of assault and battery charges and disturbing the peace against Vincent Q. Terlaje who allegedly beat up his live-in partner on July 29 in As Matuis.

Police accounts said that the victim sustained multiple bruises and a black eye.

The couple allegedly argued when the victim raised the idea of going to Guam in relation to their "conversation about their future."

Terlaje allegedly accused her of having a boyfriend on Guam. He allegedly choked her, and commented about breaking her neck.

The suspect had allegedly twisted her arms and legs, tripped her leg, pushed her to the floor, picked her up and threw her on the bed where he punched her in the eye area.

This allegedly happened when the couple's seven-year-old daughter was inside the house.

Meanwhile, the AGO criminal division also filed two criminal cases against a 27-year-old woman for beating up her boyfriend and abusing her three minor children.

The AGO charged Carmelita Guiao Amin with child abuse and neglectful actions that harmed and threatened her two minor sons on Aug. 15.

Amin also faces assault and battery, disturbing the peace, criminal mischief, and child abuse.

The AGO said that Amin assaulted her boyfriend on Aug. 8, 2004 and her 18-month-old child.

The defendant, likewise, had allegedly damaged a DVD player that her boyfriend rented from Dial Rent-To-Own Store.

She allegedly threw the DVD player on the floor and punched and scratched her boyfriend. *(Liberty Dones)*

## Cayetano to teach course at Manoa

Former Gov. Ben Cayetano will dust off his sneakers and blue jeans and join the hordes heading to the University of Hawai'i-Manoa this week—not as a student, but as a lecturer, making something close to the bottom of the barrel.

He is teaching a course called "Selected Topics in Hawai'i Politics" that filled so quickly that extra seats were added.

"There are about 40 absolutely excited undergraduates," said Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller, chairman of the political-science department.

But Cayetano—who was governor during a divisive faculty strike four years ago during which he battled the faculty over wage issues—admitted to a bit of trepidation over that point.

"I hope if there's controversy, it's because of our discussions," he said.

Cayetano expects to give students a peek inside the governor's office during his eight-year tenure and pose such questions as how to deal with a recession or how a governor would follow through if the

Akaka bill, which would create federal recognition of Hawaiians, were passed by Congress.

"I think they might be surprised because it's kind of a different world," he said.

Cayetano hasn't yet been told what he'll be paid—between \$3,000 and \$4,500, which is the range for lecturers—but said it sounds like it will probably work out to something below minimum wage based on the hours he will invest in the course.

But he said the job does come with parking.

### Island Snapshots

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor.tribune@gtepacifica.net. To check if contributions are received, call 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747.

# More junior students involved in fights

By **LIBERTY DONES**  
REPORTER

More middle school students got involved in fights last year compared with high school students.

Selected results from the 2003 CNMI Youth Risk Behavior Survey showed that 57.2 percent of 1,543 middle school students have been in a physical fight.

In high school, the number is down to 13.5 percent of 2,177 students.

Meantime, 57 percent of junior school students and 53.8 percent of high school students said in the survey that they “rode with a drinking driver during the past month.”

On alcohol and drug use, 49.4 percent of junior school students drank alcohol and 34.2 percent used marijuana.

In high school, 41.2 percent said they used marijuana; 15.8 percent used marijuana inside

the school premises, 38 percent of students were offered, sold or given illegal drugs within school property; and 14 percent consumed alcohol.

Sixty-eight percent of middle school students have smoked cigarettes and 56.6 percent chewed betel nut for the first time before age 11, while in high school, 14.6 percent said they smoked cigarettes and 40 percent of them said they smoked before age 13.

In related information, 13.8 percent of high school students said they were “physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their will and 40.2 percent of them “felt sad or hopeless almost everyday for two weeks or more.”

The survey showed that 7.4 percent of high school actually attempted suicide during the past year. The number is bigger in middle schools with 46.1 percent of them attempting suicide.

The survey data was presented by PSS in last week’s second annual juvenile justice conference on Saipan.

CNMI YRBS is a component of the Youth Risk Be-

havior Surveillance System developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to determine leading causes of mortality and morbidity in both young and adult,

and to assess how these risks behaviors change over time.

The surveillance system measures behaviors that fall into six categories: Behaviors that result in unintentional

injuries and violence, tobacco use, alcohol and drug use, sexual behaviors that result in HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, dietary behavior, and physical activity.

## US minimum wage to apply to some Plumeria Estates workers

By **AGNES E. DONATO**  
REPORTER

All workers that will be involved with the infrastructure portion of the Plumeria Estates project will receive at least the federal minimum wage, but not those who will be building the actual houses.

CNMI Housing Task Force chair Mariano R. Bermudes said that the Housing Task Force wants construction of Plumeria Estates, including infrastructure, to begin by Oct. 25, and be completed within 600 calendar days after the issuance of the notice to proceed.

If things go as planned, the new subdivision would be finished by June 2006.

Bermudes said persons that will be working on the actual building of the houses will be paid the CNMI minimum hourly wage rate of \$3.05. The developer will finance the construction of the homes. The mortgages of the completed homes, in turn, will be used to reimburse the developer for the costs of building.

The subdivision’s infrastructure, however, will be constructed using capital improvement funds. Pursuant to Gov. Juan N. Babauta’s directive regarding minimum wage for all CIPs, those that will be working on the infrastructure part of the project will get no less than the prevailing U.S. minimum wage rate which is \$5.15 per hour. They will also

receive subsequent wage rates established by the U.S. Secretary of Labor throughout the duration of the infrastructure construction.

According to Bermudes, construction firms interested in building the 128-unit Plumeria Estates subdivision in Koblerville have until 2pm today to submit their proposals to the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.

Aside from building the homes, the developer will also construct all landscaping, roadways, sidewalks, green areas, drainage, electrical distribution systems, and water distribution systems.

For its part, the Housing Task Force will provide architectural and engineering plans for all house models through NMHC, develop a government-approved subdivision layout, facilitate and assist with permitting and project management with a single-point contact, and construct a wastewater collection system through the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

The Plumeria Estates project will be located in approximately 13 hectares of land near Tottotville Subdivision in Koblerville. It includes construction of up to seven different styles of residential homes based on plans and specifications provided by the NMHC. A total of 128 houses with two-, three-, and four-bedroom units will be available to first-time homeowners at a low price.




















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HEROES



FROM/TO AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE				
From	To	Frequency		
Domestic Flights				
PER 100	2:00pm	8:00am	Rel	
International				
PER 100	6:00pm	8:00am	Rel	
Domestic Flights				
PER 100	8:00am	10:00am	Rel	
International				
PER 100	8:40am	11:40am	Rel	
Domestic Flights				
PER 100	4:00pm	4:20pm	Rel	
International				
PER 100	4:00pm	5:20pm	Rel	
Domestic Flights				
PER 100	6:00pm	8:20pm	Rel	
International				
PER 100	6:00pm	7:40pm	Rel	
Domestic Flights				
PER 100	8:00am	8:00am	Rel	
PER 100	1:00pm	1:00pm	Rel	
PER 100	2:00pm	2:00pm	Rel	
PER 100	3:00pm	3:00pm	Rel	
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PER 100	4:00pm	4:00pm	Rel	
PER 100	5:00pm	5:00pm	Rel	
PER 100	6:00pm	6:00pm	Rel	
PER 100	7:00pm	7:00pm	Rel	

**MAJURO**  
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.  
**Winds:** Northeast at 15-20 kt.  
**Highs:** 85 **Lows:** 76

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Sunny	55F (13C)	42F (6C)
 Beijing	Sunny	83F (28C)	68F (20C)
 Hong Kong	Thunder	85F (29C)	76F (24C)
 Honolulu	Showers	88F (31C)	74F (24C)
 London, England	Sunny	81F (27C)	61F (16C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	93F (34C)	62F (17C)
 Manila	Cloudy	87F (31C)	74F (23C)
 Melbourne	Cloudy	60F (16C)	47F (8C)
 Miami	Thunder	90F (32C)	76F (24C)
 New York City	Partly Cloudy	76F (24C)	66F (19C)
 Osaka	Rain	78F (26C)	68F (20C)
 Paris	Sunny	82F (28C)	61F (16C)
 Pusan	Thunder	81F (27C)	66F (19C)
 Rome	Sunny	82F (28C)	61F (16C)
 Salem, Oregon	Sunny	82F (28C)	50F (10C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	61F (16C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Cloudy	84F (29C)	73F (23C)
 Washington, DC	Thunder	82F (28C)	68F (20C)

# French frigate to visit Guam, as FDM training resumes

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

As military activities continue to increase in the Marianas region, a French surveillance frigate will arrive on Guam this Friday, even as military exercises on Farallon De Mendinilla resume today.

These events would take place just after the military completed missile exercises with the Royal Thai Navy on Guam, helicopter training on Tinian, and bombing exercises on FDM.

The Naval Forces Marianas headquartered on Guam said the French frigate *Vendemiaire* would dock at the Apra Harbor for a three-day visit.

The *Vendemiaire* is a 3,000-ton surveillance frigate equipped with a Panther helicopter. The U.S. Navy said the frigate “is one of six of this class of ships assigned to the surveillance of French overseas naval interests.”

“The ship is based in Noumea as part of the French permanent

naval fleet in the Pacific Ocean. Its crew consists of 10 officers, 36 petty officers and 40 junior sailors,” the U.S. Navy said. “The *Vendemiaire* conducts numerous missions, including patrol of the sea, navigation police, projection of deterrent forces and evacuation of French citizens.”

The Royal Thai Navy just completed its bilateral exercise with the U.S. Navy Friday. Approximately 100 miles south of Guam, the Royal Thai Navy Fokker 27 aircraft launched an AGM-84 Harpoon anti-ship missile and accurately hit a prepared, floating target at sea.

“The target, a converted barge, was then sunk by an armed Harpoon missile fired by a U.S. Navy aircraft. Target and missile debris was sunk in approximately 2,000 feet of water,” the U.S. Navy said.

Meanwhile, the CNMI Emergency Management Office announced that military training would resume on FDM today. The EMO said the



The French Navy frigate *Vendemiaire* at anchor.  
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

military would conduct aerial maneuver training from 11am to 4pm. The same training would be conducted on Sept. 12 on a similar time schedule, the EMO said.

From Sept. 15 to 22, the EMO said the military would conduct bombing exercises daily from 10am to midnight. The military will then conduct

an aerial survey on the island on Sept. 20 from 8am to 12pm.

“The general location of [these activities] will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla Training Area (R7201) from

surface to 5,000 feet mean sea level on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants,” the EMO said in a public advisory.

Noting the danger posed by the activities, the EMO advised

the public—especially fishermen, tour operators, and commercial pilots—to stay away from the site during the scheduled training.

The U.S. Navy had just completed bombing exercises on FDM Friday, which began two weeks ago. The helicopter training at the Tinian North Field, which also began during that week, concluded Thursday.

The U.S. Navy recently joined naval units of allied countries in one of the largest joint maritime exercises in the world, amid Pentagon’s plans to transform the Marianas region as the nation’s military hub on the edge of Asia.

Countries that joined the United States in the Rim of the Pacific 2004 include Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom.

## Labor sanctions employer for job abandonment

The Department of Labor has permanently barred an employer from hiring new alien workers after she left the island without making any arrangements to fulfill her contract with a non-resident worker.

Employer Gloria Miller was also ordered to pay worker Yang Xiao Hong \$2,400 for unpaid wages and unprovided work and damages, as well as a \$1,000 fine.

Labor hearing officer Linn H. Asper imposed the sanctions after Miller failed to appear for the hearing of the labor case.

He noted that Miller, who no longer resides in the Common-

wealth, was properly notified of the Aug. 19 hearing by mail delivery at an address that she recently provided to the Labor Department. While she managed to appear by telephone connection at a labor hearing for another case earlier this year, she failed to do so at the recent hearing.

“It is the conclusion of the hearing office that [Miller] had actual notice of the current hearing and chose not to appear. Therefore, [she] should be found to be in default in this matter,” Asper said.

Records showed that Miller hired Yang as a houseworker

in early 2002. In July of the same year, Miller attempted to cancel her application to employ Yang. She left Saipan the following month, before receiving the Labor Department’s permission to do so.

In an administrative order, Asper said Miller should be ordered to pay the complainant four months wages as requested by the department, in the sum of \$1,200 plus liquidated damages in an equal amount.

The hearing officer also allowed Yang to seek a transfer employer within 45 days, if she decides to stay in the Commonwealth. *(Agnes E. Donato)*

cars unlimited

crm

rms

bday







# OSHA confab 'huge success'

The Northern Marianas Alliance for Safety and Health's Governor's 2nd Annual Health and Safety Conference, held Aug. 17-21 at the Saipan Dai-Ichi Hotel, was termed a "huge success" by NMASH members, OSHA officials, Guam OSHA Consultation officials and conference participants.

NMASH attendants counted 399 total conference participants during the weeklong general sessions, training tracks in general industry, construction, and public sector, which qualified 165 attendees for OSHA training accreditation, 86 attending longshoring requirement training and an additional 63 attending CPR/ first aid training in English, Mandarin Chinese and Tagalog. Another 79 received NMASH conference certification.

After opening ceremony deliveries by CNMI Gov. Juan N. Babauta and OSHA Region IX administrator Frank Strasheim, the week's conference highlights included a fully simulated fire rescue demonstration by CNMI Department of Public Safety-Fire Division with full respiratory equipment, CNMI Public Health's presentation on food-borne illnesses, Weapons of Mass Destruction training by John Scott of AMPRO, DPS safety personnel's panels on vehicle safety, neighborhood crime watches, drug abuse and violence in the workplace.

A panel comprised of officials from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Division of Environmental Quality and Environmental Protection Agency offered Responsibilities in Safe Drinking Water, and DEQ's Dave Hodges outlined a federal grant award that creates the Green Garments Partnership between DEQ and SGMA to perform environmental audits in Saipan garment factories.

Labor Secretary Jack Teno-

rio and Ray Guerrero from the CNMI OSHA Consultation Program Office outlined its services to CNMI small businesses.

Babauta, after signing a CNMI proclamation declaring August 16-22, 2004 as CNMI Health and Safety Week at the conference's opening ceremonies, noted that change has occurred in occupational safety as a result of conflict, and that the spirit of cooperation between the public and private sectors and federal officials has created a new image for the CNMI.

The governor also announced plans to hold the 3rd Annual Governor's Health and Safety Conference as a regional conference with invitations going to all U.S. affiliated island entities, including Guam, American Samoa, Palau, the FSM, Marshall Islands and the state of Hawaii.

OSHA Region IX's Strasheim noted tremendous progress in the conference's offerings, island- and CNMI-wide safety and health situations, changes in occupational safety and health, changes in public health, and changes in infrastructure, which is critical to safety and health.

Strasheim remarked that he would hold up the SGMA Excellence 2000 Partnership members as models to any garment factories in the U.S. mainland and in Asia.

NMASH is comprised of OSHA Region IX, OTI Education Center in San Diego, the Northern Marianas College, the Division of Environmental Quality, CNMI Department of Labor, CNMI Department of Public Safety, CNMI Department of Public Works, the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association, the Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas, the Saipan Contractors Association and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Nonresident workers sign up for a training on how to perform a cardiopulmonary resuscitation during the Governor's 2nd Annual Health and Safety Conference, held from August 17-21 at the Saipan Dai-Ichi Hotel. The event was organized by the Northern Marianas Alliance for Safety and Health.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## DEQ warns vs illegal dumping

With the community busy cleaning up after Typhoon Chaba, the Division of Environmental Quality is warning people not to dump their trash illegally or they will be issued citations.

In a statement, the agency reminded people that the designated disposal sites and facilities for vegetative typhoon debris or household waste is the Department of Public Works' Lower Base Refuse Transfer Station and the Marpi landfill site.

"There are absolutely no

other public designated disposal sites permitted by the DEQ or DPW for dumping green waste and/or household waste," the agency said in a statement.

DEQ said that its Littering Control Enforcement Officers will be conducting routine surveillance of illegal dumpsites and will issue Litter Citations to persons illegally dumping on unauthorized areas.

"If you need additional information concerning this matter, contact DEQ at 664-8500.

## KES says thank you

The acting principal of Koblerville Elementary School, Eric DLG. Evangelista, expressed his gratitude yesterday to those who helped in the clean-up efforts at the school after Supertyphoon Chaba.

Evangelista cited several lawmakers, private groups, the school's own staff and personnel, and government agencies who helped get the school back on its feet.

These include House Vice

Speaker Timoth Villagomez, Reps. David Apatang, Benjamin Seman, Joseph Deleon Guerrero; Sens. Luis Crisostomo, Thomas Villagomez, Pete Reyes; Lucky R Restaurant, Natibu, Triple J Motors; the teachers and staff of Koblerville Elementary School, Saipan Southern High School principal Peter Le'au, the SSHS JROTC and high school support staff; and Saipan Waste Management's Greg Apa and Michael Hathcock.

mobil



## Business

# Frances expected to cost insurers \$2B-\$5B

By MIKE SCHNEIDER  
AP BUSINESS WRITER

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)**—Hurricanes Charley and Frances dealt Florida a one-two punch that ravaged citrus groves and ground the state's most important industry to a halt by keeping tourists away from its sandy beaches and fantasy-filled theme parks.

State officials and executives at the Insurance Information Institute, an industry group, said it was too early to guess how much damage Frances wreaked on Florida. But economists said Sunday that Florida's economy should withstand the buffeting in the long term.

"In terms of the long haul, I don't think it's going to depress Florida," said David Denslow, a University of Florida economist.

Eqecat Inc., an Oakland, Calif.-based risk modeling company, estimated the insured loss from Frances at between \$2 billion and \$5 billion. Including uninsured property, damage to government property and deductibles not paid by insurers could raise the loss in Florida to \$10 billion, the company said.

Risk Management Solutions, a Newark, Calif.-based risk modeling company, estimated

the insured losses at between \$2 billion and \$10 billion.

"It's a broad range, but it reflects the uncertainty as the storm progresses," said Kyle Beatty, a meteorologist at RMS.

The estimates for Frances come on top of the estimated \$7.4 billion in insured losses from Charley.

Gov. Jeb Bush promised a quick economic rebound from the hurricanes. The state agency that promotes tourism had planned a media campaign to counter Charley's damage but withdrew it last week as Frances threatened the state.

"A combination of things have occurred that will set us back for a little bit," Bush said Sunday. "We'll rebound."

Of Florida's biggest economic sectors—tourism, agriculture, construction, retail trade - the state's agriculture, which has \$6.4 billion in cash receipts, stands to be hurt the most by the double hit from the two hurricanes, the economists said.

Hurricane Charley caused an estimated loss of about 20 percent, or between \$150 million and \$180 million, to next year's citrus crop when it tore through southwest Florida last month. Frances made landfall in the Indian River Citrus Dis-



Mike Sands holds on during a heavy wind gust as he walks down his damaged dock along the St. Lucie River in Stuart, Fla., Sunday, Sept. 5, 2004. Sands was checking on his sailboat which is moored at the end of the dock. A number of boats crashed into his dock during the night as Hurricane Frances made landfall.

trict along the Atlantic Coast, where three-quarters of Florida's grapefruit is grown.

Agriculture Commissioner Charles Bronson said he expected losses from Frances to the state's citrus and foliage industries to be as much as the damage from Charley, placing the total agriculture loss from the two hurricanes at least at an estimated \$300 million. Foli-

age and greenhouse products recently replaced citrus as the state's top cash crop.

"There has been a lot of foliage loss and fruit off the tree. The abundant rainfall is going to cause a lot of problems," Bronson said.

President Bush planned to seek \$225 million in disaster assistance for the state's citrus growers from Charley damage and more was

expected to be requested for damage from Frances.

The long-term economic impact on Florida's largest industry—the \$50 billion tourism sector - likely will be minimal, mainly from damaged hotels along Florida's coastal midsection. The short-term impact came from lost business over the busy end-of-summer Labor Day weekend.

The Fort Lauderdale area had an estimated \$6 million in lost business from mandatory business closings. Orlando's three major theme park resorts - Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando and Sea World Orlando—lost a combined estimated \$41 million from having to close their doors for two days over a holiday weekend. The theme parks planned to reopen Monday.

Many Florida airports that were closed for almost two days were reopened Sunday or planned to be operational by Monday.

With Florida's 392,000-room hotel industry, many financial losses from hotel evacuations on the coast were compensated by high occupancy rates in the interior of the state and along the Gulf Coast.

University of Florida economist David Denslow said there also were hidden losses from the hurricanes, such as hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost greens fees for golf courses around the state.

The state's construction industry, which employs about 450,000 workers, should get a boost from the hurricanes, especially in areas of southwest Florida where structural damage from Charley was severe.

## Slow job market greets workers Labor Day

By LEIGH STROPE  
AP LABOR WRITER

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—A spotty job market and stagnant paychecks cloud this Labor Day holiday for many workers, highlighting the importance of pocketbook issues in the presidential election.

"Working harder and enjoying it less," said economist Ken Mayland, president of Clear-View Economics, summing up the state of working America.

Voters say jobs and the economy are among their top concerns in an election year marked by a struggling labor market seemingly unable to gain footing.

In August, businesses added 144,000 jobs, suggesting that a sustained increase in hiring may be coming. Economists have hoped for that for months.

An economy in transition may help to explain the bumpy job market. Technology and global competition are siphoning many U.S. jobs. Skyrocketing costs for health care, pensions and other benefits also are curtailing hiring.

"If a company experiences an increase in demand that cannot be met with the current work force, it may find alternatives to hiring full-time employees, such as outsourcing

overseas or contracting with a temporary help agency," said John Challenger, chief executive of Challenger, Gray and Christmas, a job placement and research firm.

That is a concern for President Bush's re-election campaign, which had tried to make the case that the economy was "turning a corner."

Analysts say that despite a summer slowdown, the economy is gaining steam by most measures. Also, the employment outlook is much improved from the past two years.

"We have an employment sector that still has a considerable amount of slack, an employment sector that is definitely improving, but one that hasn't improved enough to yet recapture all of the losses of the recession in the post-recession period," said Martin Regalia, vice president and chief economist at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Hiring is surging in health care. Demand is up for social service workers. Architecture, accounting, engineering and other service businesses are adding jobs. So are restaurants, stores and hotels. Workers with construction skills are sought.

People are working longer hours. As a result, productivity is more efficient, limiting the

need for more employees.

But wages and income, adjusted for inflation, are down or flat by most measures. But when benefits such as health care and pensions are included, compensation growth exceeds inflation. Economists say wages will rise as hiring picks up.

Nearly two-thirds of 1,050 full-time workers in a Labor Day survey by Harris Interactive and Kronos Inc. said they have increased job responsibilities in the past six months. One-third said they were working longer hours and 62 percent claimed they had not received a pay raise.

"The job market is still very weak," said Mark Zandi, chief economist of Economy.com. "Employers have the upper hand in any negotiation with employees, and that's weighing on compensation, particularly take home pay."

In a poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs, a third of respondents said they were dissatisfied with the amount of stress at work. Other leading complaints included advancement opportunities and health and retirement benefits. But half of those surveyed said they find their job very satisfying and four in 10 rated it somewhat satisfying.

## September stocks may be good this year

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Wall Street professionals know to keep their expectations in check in September, historically the worst month of the year for stocks. As summertime draws to a close, money managers are getting back to business, cleaning house, and often sending the market lower in the process.

September has opened strong eight of the last nine years, but it's ended with a knock-out punch for stocks for the last five, partly because institutional traders are making end-of-the-quarter portfolio changes. But some analysts, noting the market's unusual sell-off this July, question whether the pattern will hold true this year.

"The normal election year pattern shows the market rallying in July and most of August,

then selling off, so we've been much weaker than normal," said Tim Hayes, global stock strategist at Ned Davis Research in Venice, Fla. "The market may have already had that pre-election sell-off."

During seven of the last 10 presidential races, the major indexes posted gains for September, according to the Stock Trader's Almanac. The month ended in a loss three times—in 1972 and 1984, when incumbents ran and won, and in 2000, when there was no incumbent.

Part of what drives September's typical weakness is the difficulty of assessing the outlook for third-quarter earnings following the summer doldrums. It's almost as if earnings for the entire 12-week period depend on this month, Tobias

Levkovich, chief U.S. equity strategist at Citigroup's Smith Barney division, wrote in a recent note to clients. And when Labor Day falls deeper in the month, like this year, things can get even more complicated.

"We suspect that there will be a fair amount of nervousness about earnings this quarter, especially if the August employment numbers...are less than exciting," Levkovich told investors.

The much-awaited data released by the Labor Department on Friday offered some promise after two months of anemic jobs growth, but it wasn't enough to electrify the market. Employers added 144,000 new jobs last month, just short of the 150,000 economists were looking for.

## Official: Saudis OK with price band hike

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)**—Saudi Arabia does not object to OPEC raising the current price band when oil-producing nations meet Sept. 15 and is negotiating the level with other oil-rich Gulf countries, a Saudi oil official said Sunday.

The current band, set at \$22 to \$28 per barrel, most likely will go up, the official said.

The official would not say what new range was being considered. However, the London-based pan-

Arab newspaper Al-Hayat quoted Qatari Oil Minister Abdullah bin Hamad Al Attiyah as saying a committee was studying raising the price band to between \$28 and \$30 a barrel.

"This price is fair to both consumers and producers and will help avoid fluctuations," the newspaper quoted Al Attiyah as saying.

The Saudi official speaking Sunday on condition of anonymity indicated the band could

be lowered later "if the market returned to normal."

Venezuela has said it would propose an increase in the oil price range at the Sept. 15 meeting, and suggested the band be increased to between \$28 and \$35 per barrel. Saudi Arabia previously had said it wanted to leave the price as it stands.

As the world's largest oil producer, the kingdom enjoys great influence in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.



# Is business spending really going up?

By RACHEL BECK  
AP BUSINESS WRITER

**NEW YORK (AP)**—All the reasons are there for companies to ramp up spending, but that doesn't mean commitment-phobic executives are ready or willing to boost their buying budgets just yet.

For almost two years, there have been expectations for an imminent upswing in capital expenditures. Then came the war in Iraq, volatility in the stock market and a slow economic recovery, all of which rattled corporate confidence enough to hold down spending.

And now there is again big talk about a likely spending surge. Take the Commerce Department report this week that showed factory orders rising in July for the

third monthly increase in a row.

Good news? It certainly was. But can that run continue? We will believe it when we see it.

Should capital spending take off, it would be a welcome development. Consumers, who have mostly fueled the economic recovery with the excessive buying, are showing some signs of pulling back.

That isn't to say that they have called it quits, but with debts mounting, gas prices rising and jobs still hard to find, they are starting to feel pinched. A report issued by The Conference Board this week reflected just that, with consumer confidence tumbling last month for the first time since February. New retail sales data also shows some softening in their spending, with Wal-Mart Stores Inc.—the

industry bellwether—having its weakest performance last month since December 2000.

For the economy, this is bad news because consumer spending makes up two-thirds of its activity. Businesses, therefore, need to pick up the slack.

There are plenty of reasons why they should be ready to buy again. To start, many companies haven't made significant purchases since the booming days of the late 1990s, so it's time to replace or repair their older equipment and facilities.

And they have ample cash on hand to cover costs. The financing gap—the difference between capital spending and corporate cash flows—turned negative last year and continues to go that route. It was a whopping negative \$62.8 billion in the first quarter,

the most recent data available from the Federal Reserve.

In addition, there are incentives for corporations to spend. Under a use-it-or-lose-it provision in Bush's 2003 tax cut plan, companies can write off 50 percent of a capital investment when it's bought, thus reducing their tax bill. But they have to make their purchases by year-end.

With such factors in mind, ratings-agency Standard & Poor's is forecasting that capital expenditures for companies in its S&P 500 stock index will be up 5.53 percent in 2004 from a year ago, reversing two years of massive cutbacks.

Those gains were reaffirmed by a new survey by The Business Roundtable, an advocacy group of chief executives from some of the nation's biggest

companies. It found that 49 percent expect capital spending to rise over the next six months, up from 44 percent in June.

But even though there are expectations for spending to soar, that doesn't mean it will. For instance, should higher oil and commodity prices remain, it could hold buying down.

Lehman Bros. chief U.S. economist Ethan Harris worries that there are some indications that capital spending isn't taking off.

He points to core capital goods orders, the best leading indicator of equipment spending. They rose 0.6 percent in July but were roughly flat over the last three months and have stopped accelerating on a year-over-year basis, according to data from the Commerce Department. Shipment of these goods have also softened.

## ASEAN ministers OK dates for trade talks

By MICHAEL CASEY  
AP WRITER

**JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)**—Economic ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Saturday agreed on dates to start talks on free trade deals with Japan and South Korea, and key parts of a pact with China.

ASEAN Secretary General Ong Keng Yong said negotiations with Japan would get under way in April and were slated to conclude in two years with implementation still to be decided.

Negotiations with South Korea are set to begin in January and conclude in two years with the agreement going into effect by 2009, he said.

Ong said ASEAN and China settled on draft agreements to liberalize trade in goods and services as well as dispute settlement mechanisms. The agreements will be presented for approval at the ASEAN summit in Laos in October.

China and ASEAN have already agreed to establish a free-trade area by 2010.

"It's a good day for everyone. There has been progress on all fronts," Ong said.

ASEAN's 500 million people—about 17 percent of the world's population—make it an attractive market for Japan, South Korea and China. Meanwhile, ASEAN reckons free trade agreements can help compensate for losing out to cheap Chinese and Indian exports.

Japan is already the bloc's second-biggest trading partner with more than \$108 billion in total trade in 2003.

Trade between ASEAN and China jumped about 40 percent in 2003 from the pre-

vious year to \$78 billion, and was expected to rise by about as much in 2004.

"For the time being, the two-way trade volume between ASEAN nations and China accounts for 11 percent of China's overall external trade but I believe this proportion will be greatly increased in the upcoming years and probably doubled," said Bo Xilai, China's commerce minister.

On Sunday, ASEAN ministers are expected to consider time tables for free trade talks with New Zealand, Australia, and India while discussions with the European Union are at a more preliminary stage, Ong said.

"We want to tell the rest of the world that ASEAN is not going to go into a cozy, special relationship with only a few selected countries," Ong said.

On Friday, ASEAN economic ministers agreed to liberalize trade in 10 key sectors as part of a plan to forge a EU-like economic community by 2020. The specific sectors are expected to be approved at the Laos summit, the ministers said.

The liberalization plan is expected to be implemented in 2007 by Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, Ong said. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam are scheduled to follow in 2012.

The ministers also agreed to drop regional tariffs and streamline government regulations for agriculture, fisheries, automobiles, wood-based products, rubber-based products, textiles and apparels, electronics, tourism, e-commerce and health care.

Air transport could also join that list after ASEAN transport ministers meet later this year.

## Shift seen in Caterpillar-UAW standoff

By JAN DENNIS  
AP WRITER

**PEORIA, Ill. (AP)**—During more than a half-century of bargaining, heavy equipment maker Caterpillar Inc. and the United Auto Workers have forged only two labor contracts without a strike.

But there's been only a fleeting whiff of a walkout this year, as more than 9,000 UAW members have stayed on the job without a contract even after turning down two take-it-or-leave-it offers over the last nine months.

Labor experts say the standoff signals a shift in bargaining power that has given Peoria-based Caterpillar the upper hand and left union leaders wary of playing their traditional trump card.

"The fact talks have gone on this long is vivid evidence that union leaders understand their weakened position. Twenty-five years ago, the union would have gone on strike immediately," said Peter Feuille, head of the University of Illinois' Institute for Industrial and Labor Relations.

The two sides have agreed to

return to the bargaining table, though no date has been set. Caterpillar has said it will only clarify, not modify, its last failed offer, while union leaders think the company may find some wiggle room once talks resume.

Nationally, union bargaining power has slowly eroded over the last quarter-century as its membership waned and the 1981 firing of federal air traffic controllers emboldened companies to counter strikes with replacement workers, according to labor experts.

They say Caterpillar has taken a more aggressive approach than most major companies after flexing its newfound bargaining muscle during a bitter, 6 1/2-year stalemate in the 1990s, when the company foiled two strikes by using patchwork crews to maintain production and profits.

Labor experts likened the negotiations to a poker game, saying the power shift has dealt Caterpillar twice as many cards as the union while both sides try to win a new contract.

Unlike the Big Three automakers, they say, only 12 percent of Caterpillar's nearly 74,000 workers worldwide are

UAW members—down from about half in the late 1970s—making it easier to cobble together crews and keep production rolling during a strike.

Plus, they say the company proved the strategy works during its standoff with the UAW in the '90s, when up to 30 percent of workers crossed picket lines and the union ultimately accepted a contract that was essentially the same as the one that sparked the impasse.

"Any other company that felt they defeated the union and could get more concessions would be acting the same way," said Victor Devinatz, an Illinois State University professor who specializes in labor relations.

The stalemate is all too familiar in this historically blue-collar city, population 113,000, whose economic fortunes have been tethered to Caterpillar's trademark yellow equipment for decades.

Stalled contract talks are debated along with pennant races and politics in taverns and on radio call-in shows across Peoria, where the heavy equipment giant's 14,000 jobs dwarf the next-largest employers.

## Alitalia's future at stake in union talk

**ROME (AP)**—The future of Italian flagship carrier Alitalia is at stake in a meeting with unions Monday to reveal the number of planned job cuts as part of a restructuring plan aimed at averting collapse.

The plan is expected to include slashing about a third of 22,000 jobs, but Alitalia officials have refused to confirm the figure.

Union approval of the recovery plan is crucial to the company's survival as it would allow Alitalia to access a \$488 million loan approved by the Italian government and the European Union.

Without the loan, Alitalia says it can pay salaries only until the end of this month.

At the meeting Monday afternoon, the state-run company will lay out its plan, hoping to persuade reluctant unions to go along with it.

"We'll see the plan and make our judgment," said this week Guglielmo Epifani, the leader of the country's largest union, CGIL. "However, for now I see they're only acting on cutting labor, and this is not a good starting point."

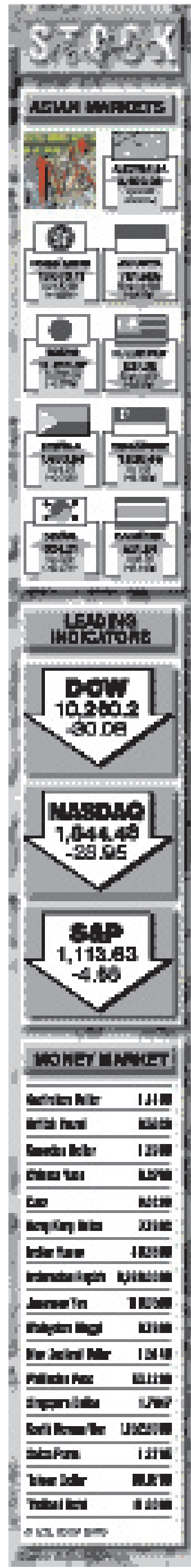
Alitalia has been tightlipped about the relaunch plan devised by Chairman and Chief Executive Giancarlo Cimoli, who became the head of the company in May after turning around Italy's state-run railway. But a few details have emerged.

The plan foresees the creation

of a "good" company responsible for flight operations, which the government would aim to privatize as much as possible. The less appealing ground services would be hived off into a "bad" company, which state-owned body Fintecna might buy into.

"Cimoli's industrial plan is more than enough to save Alitalia," said Lucio Cannamela, a Milan-based transport analyst at Abaxbank. "If the plan does go through, the company will have good possibilities to get back on track."

Cimoli also said that when the restructuring plan is approved, the company will need a capital increase between of between \$1.2 and \$1.8 billion by next March.





# Opinion

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# EDITORIAL







# Former NMC president to testify in SU trial

By **LIBERTY DONES**  
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College founding president Agnes McPhetres is expected to testify in federal court within the week—most likely today—to give her account as adviser for Saipan University founder Soon Kyung Park.

Park is on jury trial for multiple fraud charges for alleged illegal transport of students to Saipan from China last year and misrepresentation, among other things. McPhetres' name has come out as among the main local proponents who helped Park establish SU.

McPhetres, who left NMC about four years ago, worked as consultant for SU, doing most of its application requirements to have its license and learning designation status in the CNMI approved.

The prosecution, led by assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick Smith told the court Friday that his team would want to present McPhetres on the witness stand today.

During the testimony of former SU president Jullie Ulloa, she said that it was McPhetres, her former NMC boss, who introduced her to Park.

Ulloa also testified that she would always consult with McPhetres on issues

pertaining to SU including its problems with alleged misrepresentation in China, and the lack of resources and equipment to begin an education program.

Acting immigration director Antonio Sablan said that McPhetres had regularly met with him last year to follow up on the permit applications of SU students.

Sablan said that McPhetres would come three times a week and spend about 30 minutes to an hour discussing SU matters with him.

Sablan said that he clearly told McPhetres that employment is prohibited in the CNMI.

Park had brought some 100 students

from China last year for a work-study program on Saipan.

Most of the students remain on island to pursue a fraud case against Park.

They said they spent \$5,000 to \$10,000 to get to Saipan including a \$3,550 tuition paid to Park for fall semester.

The students claimed that Park promised them employment, which would earn them up to \$1,500 a month in the CNMI.

Aside from McPhetres, other witnesses expected to appear in court are former president Jess Taisague and other key staff including some faculty.

The names of former lawmakers Her-

man Palacios and Oscar Rasa were also dragged in last week's testimonies.

Ulloa said that Palacios provided housing to some SU students at his HerJoy Apartment in San Antonio.

The congressman was then the chairman of the House committee on labor and immigration.

Ulloa also indicated that Palacios and Rasa were giving advice to SU representatives and officials when it faced various complaints from students.

Ulloa testified that Palacios had discussed study-work program options with SU to resolve students' complaints about the lack of work on the island.

## GOVT

From Page 1

Eucon International College, and International Business and Professional College had approached his office for a possible grant of work permits to foreign students.

"I was against it," Sablan said.

During a cross examination, Park's lawyer Joseph Arriola focused on the draft amendment, pointing out that the government itself had seen loopholes in the existing foreign student program regulation, known as 706H.

But Sablan said that, "there's no mention in the provision that students can work."

"But it does not address squarely work study issue," Arriola noted.

When pressed further, Sablan maintained that the current regulation "clearly prohibits employment of foreign students."

The director said that the proposed amendment did not prosper partly because it would infringe on the Nonresident Workers Act.

"If a student is non-U.S., he or she must comply with other laws such as the Nonresidents Act," said Sablan.

Arriola went back to the proposed amendment, which he said, cites that "public interest requires the amendment of 706H."

The lawyer said that the amendment would aptly address foreign student employment.

Arriola further cited that the proposed emergency regulation was being rushed "in time for this coming school year" which was fall 2003.

"Was it for the Pacific Gateway?" Arriola asked Sablan, referring to NMC's foreign student program

called Pacific Gateway project.

The Gateway program, which has not been implemented as planned up to now, was originally projected to start as early as last fall.

Sablan in response said it was not just for NMC. "This is applicable to all institutions if adopted."

Sablan agreed that the proposed amendment was "more detailed" than 706H.

In a re-direct examination, Smith had made Sablan state that the proposed amendment was signed by acting AG Clyde Lemons Jr. on Aug. 4, 2004 but it had no concurrence by Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

Smith had Sablan testify that one of the reasons the proposal was dropped was its contradiction with another law and therefore "it's a bad idea."

Smith had also pointed out that the defendant had been telling students about a work study program in CNMI as of April 2003.

Park brought some 100 Chinese students in September and October 2003 to Saipan, who each paid some \$5,000 up to \$10,000, including a \$3,550 tuition.

Park allegedly signed contracts with the students indicating that they would be able to work in the Commonwealth.

Sablan had testified that from the very beginning, his office was doubtful about SU's application to bring in students from China.

Sablan, however, admitted that he recommended SU's approval for a learning designation status from the AGO.

SU received the designation status in late August 2003, he said.

Sablan said that he denied 44 of the 135 applications for authorization to board submitted by SU.

developments affecting the islands.

Many workers stayed with their families at home, while others were seen holding picnics at pavilions on Beach Road.

Unlike last year, the CNMI government had no celebration for its employees yesterday, as those involved in planning the event became busy with recovery efforts following the onslaught of supertyphoon Chaba.

The Babauta administration is reportedly considering postponing the event or just canceling it altogether for this year.

In 2002, the government also canceled Labor Day celebrations due to financial woes. (*John Ravelo*)

## Arson suspected in Vanuatu government fire

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand** (RNZI)—The provincial government headquarters on the Vanuatu island of Tanna has been completely destroyed by fire.

The building had been used for the provincial government since the country's independence 24 years ago.

Police spokesman, Major Arthur Caulton, says officials are working from the local police station until the Department of Provincial Affairs finds alternative arrangements.

Major Caulton says the police have not ruled out links between the fire and the recent burnings of a number of ballot boxes by frustrated political supporters.

"We believe it was arson; at this stage we haven't had any suspect or anyone responsible for the arson but our boys are working very hard on looking at how the fire started and when it was started," Caulton said.

## Protester hurls cheese at Australian PM

**SYDNEY, Australia** (AP)—A disgruntled voter hurled a bag of cheese at Australian Prime Minister John Howard during a campaign speech on Friday, telling him he



would soon be out of a job.

At an election stop on the Tweed River, 500 kilometers (311 miles) north of Sydney, protester Paul Taylor worked his way to the front of a crowd of waiting media before letting rip with his bag of cheese.

The bag landed at the prime minister's feet and did not hurt him.

Howard was speaking to reporters about his plans to support logging communities in the southern state of Tasmania.

Taylor said the Prime Minister should offer the same support to people hit by other forms of industrial deregulation, and then launched into a tirade against Howard and local parliamentarian Larry Anthony.

"On behalf of the working class people in the Tweed I'm going to present this cheese to you because you and your mate are past your use by date and you'll soon be looking for jobs," he said.

It was not immediately clear why Taylor chose to toss cheese at Howard but the protest came just days after allegations surfaced that one of Howard's lawmakers had branded him a "lying rodent." Also, the deregulation of the dairy industry which started in 2000 is a key issue in the region.

## Car crashes into pole; 2 injured

**GUAM** (PDN/PIR)—A Honda Civic left its contents strewn on a sidewalk next to a power pole last night after crashing along Marine Corps Drive near the Micronesia Mall intersection.

No police officer was available as of press time to provide information about the accident that occurred after 8 p.m. yesterday.

Two victims of the car crash—a male and a female—were transported to Guam Memorial Hospital's emergency room around 8:40 p.m. Friday, said Nursing Supervisor Roger Cauley.

One of the patients was undergoing observation as of 10:20 last night, Cauley said.

Earlier Friday, the teenage girl who was seriously injured in a car accident in Yigo Friday remained in critical condition.

The 17-year-old girl, who was driving a black Mazda MX-6, suffered head, spine and internal injuries in a two-vehicle collision, police have said.

The other vehicle involved was a Ford Ranger traveling northbound near McDonald's in Yigo, police have said. The Mazda was attempting to make a left turn from Chalan Tun Ignacio Chana when the two vehicles collided, police have said.

## TOILING

From Page 1

prepared to report for work—unmindful of the well-deserved rest he could have had, while many workers celebrated Labor Day.

"Instead of resting at home, I'd rather work. Besides, I don't have anything to do at home," Fajardo said.

People from all walks of life spent Labor Day—the day dedicated to the contributions of the labor force—in their own ways.

Emergency Management Office personnel stayed at their workplace in Capitol Hill, monitoring the latest weather

without a U.S. visa. Many can't go to Guam," he said.

He added, "Some of the Japanese investors I've talked to said they didn't mind investing on Saipan, even if there's a casino industry on Guam. But there's no way they would invest on Tinian. In other words, they can't see [themselves] competing with Guam out of Tinian, but they don't mind competing out of Saipan. Let's just hope that the Legislature will find the guts to do something about this."

Earlier this year, Tenorio submitted to the CNMI Legislature a draft bill that would establish a casino industry on Saipan. The lawmakers have yet to act on the proposal.

Proposition A, which would legalize controlled casino gambling on Guam, will be on the November general election ballot. The initiative made by a group called Citizens for Economic Diversity would create a Guam Casino Gaming Control Commission, and

limit casino operations to hotels with 100 or more rooms.

This early, polls show the initiative gaining a significant support from voters.

## FOOD

From Page 1

any report from the Northern Islands after Sarika passed by. Earlier, though, Songda reportedly hit the three northern islands badly, totally destroying their crops.

Songda also totally destroyed two houses and blew away roofs of two other houses on Alamagan and Agrihan. The supertyphoon also destroyed two houses and damaged a boat on Pagan.

Recent reports said that some 36 people reside in the three northern islands—13 on Agrihan, 12 on Alamagan, and 11 on Pagan. The residents reportedly took refuge on underground shelters as Songda approached the islands.

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# Business

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# Asia

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# World

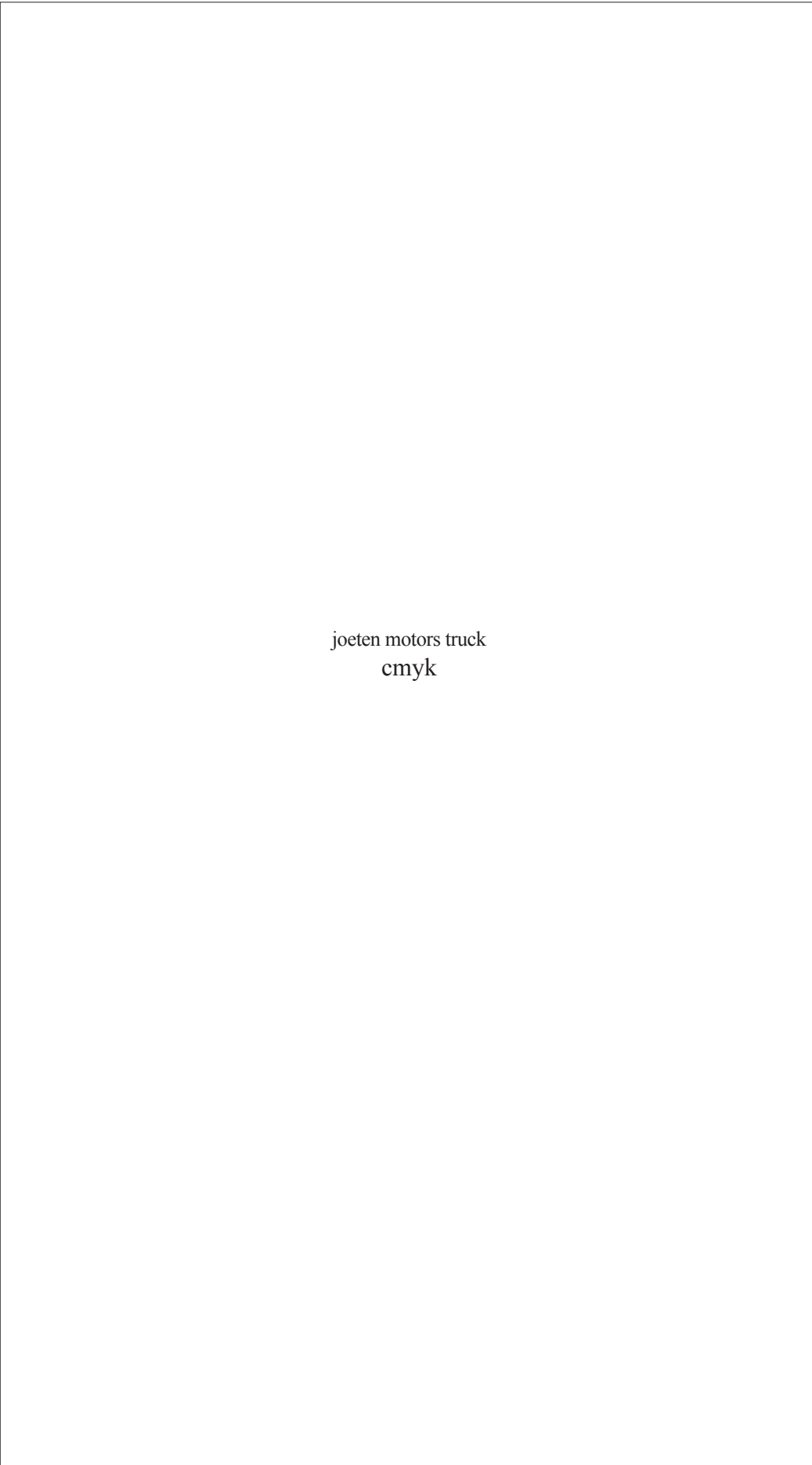
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## Life &amp; Style

## For England's 228-year-old novelist, the ink has yet to dry

By JENNIFER FREY  
THE WASHINGTON POST

We live in a Jane Austen universe. A book about a book club that reads only Jane Austen is firmly entrenched on best-seller lists. Keira Knightley, one of Hollywood's reigning "It" girls, is filming yet another version of "Pride and Prejudice." Elizabeth and her beloved Mr. Darcy are living out the married chapter of their lives in "Mr. Darcy Takes a Wife: Pride and Prejudice Continues" at bookstores. We can buy "Pride and Prejudice," the board game, and Jane Austen paper dolls. Jane Austen, the sleuth, has her own line of mystery novels.

Austen, it appears, is our new Shakespeare. Two hundred years after her novels were written, she's ascended to that level where her work is imitated, quoted, ripped off and, yes, revered. Citing Jane these days is like playing a smart card.

"There's always been a need in people to have something that cues smart, or well-

like Austen: privileged women, privileged environs, an obsession with material wealth and class distinctions, and, always, the underlying mating dance.

But before we go too far, let us now state, upfront, that if Ms. Austen ever got her otherworldly self a copy of "Confessions of a Shopaholic" (wildly popular chick lit by Brit Sophie Kinsella), she wouldn't necessarily consider it a tribute. Her heroines may have their flaws, but in chick lit, a lack of geographical intelligence, financial prudence and some basic common sense seem to be common afflictions. Call it Jane Austen Lite.

"The references to Austen that any of us make are a way to try and say a book that concerns young women and courtship needn't be idiotic," says author Darcy Cosper. "But I definitely think we take Jane Austen's name in vain."

Cosper, 34, a smart and serious Austen reader, set out to subvert chick lit (she hates that term) and the importance it places on getting The Man. Her heroine in "Wedding Season" rejects the right guy because he demands all or nothing—and she decides marriage just isn't for her.

The book can now be found on chick lit tables nationwide. The comparison, it appears, is unavoidable. Where did all this come from? What suddenly made Austen so unbearably hip?

Michael Gamer, a University of Pennsylvania professor who teaches a class about Austen's translation to other media, dates the beginnings of the transformation to a World War II-era renewal of interest in her work (Hollywood's 1940 version of "Pride and Prejudice" starred Laurence Olivier and Greer Garson). But the big turning point came with the onslaught of films near the end of the 20th century, he says.

"It's really only been in the last decade or so that Austen has become a truly popular novelist that everyone reads and knows about," Gamer says. "Something happens

when you put Austen on the screen or when you repackage Austen for a film audience. It transforms the novels."

The Brits rediscovered Austen first, filming most of her novels in the 1980s. In 1995, Hollywood made "Sense and Sensibility" and "Persuasion" into films.

Then came Colin Firth. His appearance as Mr. Darcy in the 1996 BBC version of "Pride" was a phenomenon. Women played the video again and again, as do the characters in British author Helen Fielding's popular "Bridget Jones" books, one of which openly riffs on "Pride," right down to The Man bearing the name Darcy.

In 1996, perky Alicia Silverstone played an Emma-like character in the fun, sharp "Clueless"; Gwyneth Paltrow did play Emma in the eponymous 1997 movie. "Mansfield Park" made it on screen in 1999.

Audiences took the movies for the romance, but Austen also appeals and resonates—as Martin Amis pointed out in

a 1996 New Yorker article—because of her sharp rendering of class and class distinctions.

Modern life may not be overtly stratified as it was in Regency England, but sense of status and place is still an essential underpinning. Witness the wild success of "Nanny Diaries" and "The Devil Wears Prada," novels that expose the excesses and obnoxiousness of America's reigning class through the gaze of what is, essentially, the servant.

"There's a host of reasons 'Why Austen? Why now?' and they're all speculative," Gamer says. "It's a complicated question."

One answer comes from someone who is an Austen expert only in that she has read the canon countless times. "Austen," says Nell Minow, editor of a corporate governance Web site, "has a stunningly modern sensibility. And it took the rest of the world a couple centuries to catch up with her."

To categorize Austen as simply a writer of romantic fiction is foolish. Austen is cynical where most romance is hopeful; her characters are often deeply flawed. Her world may be, on the surface, one of cottages and vast lawns, but it's really an interior world, one she renders, unsparingly, with a masterful level of social observation.

What Austen did, Gamer explains, is "adopt traditional relationships of romance into a more radical framework." Her novels keenly observe, and strongly critique, a time in which economic circumstances and rigid class restrictions limited women's choices. In the end, the only real choice was marriage, hence the sardonic version of the traditional marriage plot, with the heroine swiftly married off in the final pages.



Gwyneth Paltrow as "Emma" in the 1997 movie

"One of the things that is appealing about the novels is that they get at the predicament young heterosexual women face when they live in an age that frankly penalizes any real radical behavior," Gamer says. "So her heroines are, for the most part, smart women who are often compelled to spit tacks at the folly around them, but don't really have a lot of options except to change from within."

In chick lit, the marriage plot is alive and well. But what's usually lost is Austen's ability to resolve a courtship filled with excitement and witty repartee into a union that seems less a marriage than a merging of two well-matched minds.

Elizabeth enlightens her Darcy and vice versa, Minow points out, and the same goes for Emma and her Mr. Knightley. But when Bridget gets her Mr. Darcy or "Shopaholic's" Becky Bloomwood lands her Luke Brandon, it's because the men love them despite their foolishness and frippery. It is salvation, in some ways; after all, it frees the women from being dependent on their seemingly not-so-compelling careers.

"They seem to be pretty bleak and dystopic about the workplace and what it offers to women, which seems to me right on the money," Gamer says of chick lit. "But instead of thinking maybe the work force should be transformed, they end up pitching a fantasy outlet of marriage. So Bridget ends up working as a part-time consultant from home or something like that."

If these books were all just an extension of the standard Disney princess fairy tales, they could easily be dismissed as romantic fantasy. But that's not how they're packaged. They're marketed as Austen's literary progeny. Given Austen's reputation for realism in the guise of romance, that poses the million-dollar question: Is this really what modern-day women want their lives to be?

"It's sort of pompous of me to say anything," Cosper says, "but I came to it thinking, 'How can this be what the women of my generation want to read? How can this be what the women of my generation are writing?' I admit I was confused and disappointed by it. And I was confused and disappointed by the connections to Austen, because, in fact, she's such a subversive writer."



Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy in the 1996 BBC version of "Pride and Prejudice"

read," says Robert Thompson, a Syracuse University professor specializing in popular culture. "It tends to be Shakespeare. It's something that is immediately read as 'I'm smart, I'm well-informed,' which is usually done to play against expectations. As in, 'I may be a flighty blonde, but I can recognize a Rembrandt.'"

Nowhere is this more evident than the large chain bookstores, where "chick lit" tables are smothered with volumes boasting an Austen reference in a blurb on the back cover. Austen, it's been suggested, is the great-great-grandmother of chick lit—that exploding genre about upwardly mobile young women and their wayward travails through the world of modern courtship (and shopping), set mostly in the best neighborhoods in London or New York.

Hmmmm. That does sound suspiciously



The poster of the 1999 movie "Mansfield Park" starring Frances O'Connor



# Hollywood has record summer, nearly \$4B

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Summer at movie theaters was a true underdog story for Michael Moore and a gang of dodgeball dimwits, who helped propel Hollywood to another season of record revenue, though the number of moviegoers fell slightly.

Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" became the first documentary to top the \$100 million mark, while Ben Stiller and Vince Vaughn's goofy comedy "Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story" was another surprise \$100 million hit.

Teamed with such familiar favorites as "Shrek," "Spider-Man" and "Harry Potter" sequels, "Fahrenheit 9/11" and "Dodgeball" helped lift the industry to an all-time summer haul of just under \$4 billion from the first weekend in May through Labor Day, according to box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

That's up 3 percent from the previous record of \$3.9 billion set last summer.

But like summer 2003, higher admission prices meant fewer tickets were sold. Exhibitor Relations estimates moviegoers bought 637.8 million tickets domestically this past summer, down 0.76 percent from 2003.

"What this summer on balance taught us, I think, is people were reasonably satisfied," said Marc Shmuger, vice chairman at Universal Pictures, which had hits with "The Bourne Supremacy" and "Van Helsing" and a flop with "Thunderbirds."



Princess Fiona, voiced by actress Camron Diaz, introduces her new husband Shrek, voiced by Mike Myers, to her parents the rulers of Far Far Away in DreamWorks Pictures computer-animated comedy "Shrek 2," in this undated promotional photo.

"I don't think they were extraordinarily satisfied, but you know what? At the end of the day, reasonably satisfied's not a terrible report card."

The sequels "Shrek 2," "Spider-Man 2" and "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" took the win, place and show spots at the box office, with other follow-ups such as "The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement" performing well.

"Shrek 2," reuniting the voice cast of Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz and Eddie Murphy, raced

past 2003's smash "Finding Nemo" to become the top-grossing animated movie ever at \$436.7 million.

The slightly naughty irreverence of "Shrek," along with computer-generated imagery that appeals to tech-savvy audiences, helped broaden the movie's appeal beyond the family audience.

"Spider-Man 2," a reunion for director Sam Raimi and stars Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst and James Franco, came up short of the \$404 million gross of the

2002 original, but the sequel still made a fortune at \$370 million. It should finish a bit ahead of "The Passion of the Christ" as the year's No. 2 hit so far.

Likewise, "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" fell shy of the box-office spells weaved by its two predecessors, but the movie's \$247 million gross bodes well for the franchise, whose next installment is due out next year.

Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" was unlike any other summer hit. Its \$118 million domestic total was

six times that of the previous record holder among feature-length documentaries, Moore's "Bowling for Columbine."

Summer regular Will Smith scored another success with "I, Robot," which joined Dennis Quaid's "The Day After Tomorrow," Brad Pitt's "Troy" and M. Night Shyamalan's "The Village" to round out the season's \$100 million hit parade.

Other solid earners included Tom Cruise's "Collateral," Will Ferrell's "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy" and the teary sleeper "The Notebook."

Summer duds included Halle Berry's "Catwoman," Jackie Chan's "Around the World in 80 Days," Kate Hudson's "Raising Helen" and Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen's "New York Minute."

## 'Vanity Fair' vies for top award at Venice

**VENICE, Italy (AP)**—"Vanity Fair" gave Reese Witherspoon a chance to buck the on-screen custom of portraying 19th-century women as corseted ornaments, with the actress on Sunday describing her willful and ambitious character as a prototype for modern feminism.

The movie—adapted from William Makepeace Thackeray's novel—was the first of three American movies competing for best picture at the Venice Film Festival. At a press preview Sunday, the film was applauded but did not receive the raucous cheers that often hint at a potential winner.

"Vanity Fair" tells the story of Becky Sharp, a girl from the gutters who bulls her way upward in class-conscious British society despite monumental scorn. The character has sometimes been described as an unscrupulous social-climber, but director Mira Nair's film depicts her far more sympathetically.

"Becky Sharp was sort of an early feminist," Witherspoon said. "Becky Sharp was a very radical character at that time. Now we think of ambitious women all the time. We see politicians, and actors and actresses—different people making their way in society. ... I do think she's one of the early, early prototypes for feminism in literature."



Witherspoon

The Indian-born Nair—who won the top Golden Lion prize here three years ago for "Mon-

soon Wedding"—described Sharp as "an ultimate modern woman."

Screenwriter Julian Fellowes said Thackeray was posing a question with his book: "What if women did not accept the fact that they were just supposed to sit down and take it, whatever they were born, and accept their class and lack of financial support or whatever?"

Also Sunday, a mass of modern issues hit the screens here, with the out-of-competition presentation of Spike Lee's "She Hate Me." The film—which Lee has described as being "about sex, greed, money and politics"—got mixed reviews in the United States, sometimes criticized for mixing too many issues.

Lee—who is also one of nine jurors deciding the Golden Lion awards—said that was done on purpose.

A total of 21 pictures are fighting it out for the Golden Lion during the 11-day festival. Among these are two other American films: "Birth" by Jonathan Glazer and "Palindromes" by Todd Solondz.

Other contenders screening Sunday included hometown favorite "Ovunque Sei" ("Wherever You Are"), by Italian director Michele Placido; "Shijie" ("The World"), by China's Jia Zhangke; and animated feature "Hauru No Ugoku Shiro" ("Howl's Moving Castle"), by Japan's Hayao Miyazaki.

wallace



## Those looking for new love must get out there and mix

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

**DEAR ABBY:** "Lonely in Georgia," the woman who divorced her cheating spouse eight years ago, wrote that she's miserably lonely. I know how she feels.

I was widowed four years ago, and when I was ready to date, it seemed impossible to find "Miss Right." By a stroke of good fortune, I discovered an online dating service that matched me with people with shared personality traits and interests.

My first date was with a lady with whom I immediately felt comfortable. We have been seeing each other for six months, are engaged, and intend to be married soon. I hope "Lonely" finds this helpful.

"EUREKA" IN ARIZONA

**DEAR "EUREKA":** Congratulations to you both. Very few people are lucky enough to strike platinum on the first try. I wish you every happiness. Read on:

**DEAR ABBY:** I was divorced at 44, and decided to finally do something I'd always wanted to try: country-western dancing. I went not knowing anyone. When a gentleman asked me to dance, he didn't mind that I was a novice. He led me through the basics. He also mentioned free lessons offered by the establishment, and I decided to go. I soon got to know the regulars (even experienced dancers took lessons). Eventually, I met the man who would become my husband. We have been married three years, and I have never been happier.

HAPPILY PARTNERED AGAIN

**DEAR HAPPILY PARTNERED:** I have often said that if you want to meet new people, get involved in a new activity. My longtime personal assistant, Olivia, also met the man of her dreams, Richard, while square dancing — and I agree that it can be fertile territory for romance.

**DEAR ABBY:** I, too, divorced a cheating spouse. "Lonely" should consider talking to a therapist to help her regain her self-esteem. After I did it, I focused on attending events and functions where I could meet the kind of man I was interested in. I chose museum and gallery exhibitions and the theater, and went with girlfriends. I met a wonderful man at a group for over-35 singles. "Lonely" should get out and enjoy herself. I'm sure she'll find the person she's looking for.

BEEN THROUGH IT IN GEORGIA

**DEAR BEEN THROUGH IT:** No one ever met anyone by sitting at home and brooding. The most important thing is to put yourself out there.

**DEAR ABBY:** My engagement went sour, an abusive relationship followed, and so did many disappointing dates. I decided to stop looking for a man and focus on things in life that truly made me happy. I began substitute teaching and mentoring high school students. It was then that the man of my dreams walked into my life. We married a year ago and are having the time of our lives. Please tell "Lonely" not to give up. Men are attracted to women who are happy and self-fulfilled.

MARRIED AND STILL GETTING OFFERS

**DEAR MARRIED:** Right you are! As my mother often used to say, "Happiness is the best cosmetic." And so is a positive outlook. Read on:

**DEAR ABBY:** I was divorced for 16 years before I met Mr. Right four years ago. All it took was living and enjoying what I had instead of worrying about what I was missing. Most men and women over the age of 40 recognize the signs of someone "on the hunt." It is a huge turnoff.

HAPPY IN FALLON, NEV.

**DEAR HAPPY:** I agree. And that is why I advise people to involve themselves in activities where they can improve their community. There are many ways to do it—work for their political party, as a hospital volunteer, Habitat for Humanity. Even if they don't fall in love, they can make some wonderful friends and make a difference.

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*



Dear Abby

# Women to hike 1,200 miles of Arctic Ocean

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Haul 250 pounds of supplies on skis. Add attacking polar bears, 80-foot ice walls and temperatures at 75 below zero.

Traverse for 100 days.

The latest reality TV show? Not quite. Former schoolteachers and veteran explorers Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen plan to trek 1,200 miles of the mostly frozen Arctic

Ocean starting in February.

Bancroft was in New York Thursday to promote the book "No Horizon Is So Far," about her 2001 Antarctic skiing expedition with Arnesen.

She's also training for their upcoming adventure to the North Pole.

"I'm road biking, kayaking and pulling three car tires for four or five hours," Bancroft said.

The car tires don't approach the weight they'll carry from Russia to the North Pole and down to Canada, but "the friction creates resistance," Bancroft said.

The 49-year-old Bancroft, and Arnesen, 51, will ski-sail on the choppy frozen ice and wear dry suits for swimming in open water. Supplies will sit in a canoe-like sled that can float.

Like the previous expedi-

tion, they'll share their trip with millions of schoolchildren by the Internet and specialized curriculum.

So far, the trip—expected to cost \$1 million—is sponsored by Volvo and the Norwegian government. CNN tracked the explorers' progress by satellite phone interviews during the 2001 expedition, which cost \$2.5 million.

## Johnny Depp says he enjoys aging

**VENICE, Italy (AP)**—Unlike legions of other Hollywood stars, hipster heartthrob Johnny Depp says he actually enjoys aging. The boyish-looking Depp—who plays the author of "Peter Pan" in his latest picture "Finding Neverland"—was asked if the children's character famed for never growing old made him wish for the same power.

"Nowadays, it's all a question of surgery, isn't it?" he joked to reporters at the Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

"No, of course the notion is beautiful—the idea of staying a boy or a child forever. But I think you can. I've known plenty of people in their later years who were like little kids, had the energy of little children, the curiosity and fascination. I think we can keep that. It's important we keep that," he said.

"But I think it's great fun growing old. I think it's great."

Depp also discussed the Scottish accent he assumes for his role as writer J.M. Barrie.

"Musically, rhythmically, I initially couldn't quite get a hold of it," he said. "Luckily I found this dialect coach who helped me out a great deal. ... Also, we had a couple of crew guys who were Scottish who picked up the falsities."



U.S. actor Johnny Depp, waving, arrives by boat for a press conference at the 61st Venice Film Festival in Venice, northern Italy, Saturday, Sept. 4, 2004. Depp is in Venice to present his latest movie "Finding Neverland," which will be shown out of competition.

## Barbara Walters leaving ABC's '20/20'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Barbara Walters says she is departing the ABC news magazine show "20/20" after 25 years because she wants to "leave at the top" and avoid being forced out.

"Newsmagazines in general are somewhat in jeopardy, I think," Walters told The New York Times for Sunday's editions. "I didn't want anyone to say, she was forced out, she had to leave."

Walters, 74, said that when she first became an evening news anchor, coanchor Harry Reasoner did not want to work with a woman and wouldn't talk to her off the air. Soon, she said, she was getting "the sympathy vote."

"One day I got a telegram from a man I did not know. It said, 'Don't let the bastards get you down.' And it was signed John Wayne," she said.

Walters says she plans to stay in television, continuing her interview specials and appearances on "The View." ABC News appointed Elizabeth Vargas to replace her on "20/20."

Walters said television news has changed in recent years.

"And I'll tell you the way it's going to be," she said.

"We're going to hear

that a woman had a love affair with a frog. The producers are going to come to me and say: 'Barbara, this woman had a love affair with a frog. Diane Sawyer already has the woman lined up. Do you want to do the frog?' And I will say, 'O.K., but only if I can get the frog and his mother.' And they'll say: 'But the frog wants an hour. And before you do the frog, the frog is going to do 'Oprah.' O.K.?"



Walters

## Iger said to be Eisner's choice at Disney

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Michael Eisner has told Walt Disney Co. directors that company president Robert Iger is his "preferred choice" to succeed him as chief executive of the media giant, according to a newspaper report published Sunday.

Eisner told board members Iger "would be an excellent guardian of the Disney assets," he said in an interview last week with the Los Angeles Times. "There's nobody," Eisner said, "who has a better education and training to do that job."

The question of who would succeed Eisner has grown more critical during an ongoing campaign against his leadership by former directors Roy E. Disney and Stanley Gold. At the company's annual meeting in March, shareholders withheld 45 percent of their votes for Eisner.

But despite the infighting, which stripped Eisner of his chairman title, it's unclear when he would leave the company. Eisner's contract expires in 2006, but it could be extended.

Iger, whose contract expires in September 2005, has recently met with investors and executives and told the Times he would like the top job.

"I have a right to be taken seriously. I feel I know the company well. I have the knowledge," he said. "There comes a time when it's appropriate to say, 'Hey, this is a job I'm interested in.'"

Eisner has not always supported Iger so strongly, but the two have been working more closely after Iger defended Eisner and the company following criticism at the March meeting.

"We are clearly now much more partners than in the past," Eisner said.

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# Pastimes

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Shannon Essenpreis wins Jr. Miss crown

MOBILE, Ala. (AP)—Texan Shannon Essenpreis was crowned America's Junior Miss after belting out a Broadway showtune and soaring through interviews with her "bubbly" personality.

Though Essenpreis was crowned Saturday night, television viewers won't see it until July as producers switch to a "reality TV" format. PAX Network camera crews followed the 50 contestants for two weeks leading up to Saturday's contest.

Essenpreis was among five finalists who were given on-the-spot questions tailored to their individual interests. She was asked how she would use the enthusiasm she's displayed as her school's mascot into her planned career as a broadcast journalist.

"I was so nervous," she said after the show. "And the question was so long that by the end of it, I wasn't sure what they were asking me."

Her answer? She'll report on the positive aspects of life while maintaining her personal optimism.

After the contest, Heisman Trophy winner and Junior Miss judge Herschel Walker said he was particularly impressed with Essenpreis' charm and "bubbly" character in her interview last week. Essenpreis won a \$50,000 scholarship.





# Singh wins Buick Open, outlasting Daly

By LARRY LAGE  
AP SPORTS WRITER

**BUICK GRAND BLANC,**

**Mich.** (AP)—Vijay Singh outlasted John Daly with a 5-under 67 Sunday to win the Buick Open with a 23-under 265 for his fourth victory of the year and 19th of his career. Daly, vying for a second win in one year for the first time, finished a stroke back after shooting a 66 and bogeying the 18th hole.

Tiger Woods started the day three strokes behind Singh, and pulled within a stroke while

shooting a 66. He finished at 21 under, two strokes behind the winner and tied with Carlos Franco (67) for third.

Woods will look to snap his streak without a major at nine in two weeks at the PGA Championship.

Defending champion Jim Furyk, who shared the second-round lead with Singh, finished tied for sixth at 17 under after shooting a 68 on Sunday.

The final round turned into a virtual match-play between Singh and Daly, one of the top golfers in the world against one of the most popular.

Singh's bogey at 18 created an opportunity for Daly to force a playoff, but Daly was unable to take advantage of the break.

Singh is just the third two-time Buick Open champion, and the first since Julius Boros won at Warwick Hills a second time in 1967.

Entering the tournament, Singh had 10 top-10 finishes. But since winning consecutive tournaments three months ago, he has just two top-five finishes and was tied for 28th at the U.S. Open and 20th at the British Open.

The Fijian played well this week after changing his putter,



Vijay Singh of Fiji watches his tee shot on the eighth hole at the Buick Open at Warwick Hills Golf & Country Club in Grand Blanc, Mich., Sunday, Aug. 1, 2004.

going back to a standard putter after using a long one for 2 1/2 years. He also said earlier in the week that he stopped worrying about chasing Woods in the world rankings.

Woods is No. 1 in the world rankings, and Singh is third.

Singh won his seventh straight tournament when he at least shared the lead after 54 holes, dating to the 2002 Shell Houston open.

With Singh, Daly and Woods atop the leaderboard entering the final round, it was a Buick

Open unlike any other.

A sea of fans waiting at the first tee roared when Daly was introduced and just politely clapped for Singh, who seemed to get a kick out of the rock-star like reception for Daly.

As they walked down the first

fairway, Singh patted Daly on the back and both chuckled and shook their heads, fans hooted and hollered best wishes toward Daly in a preview of what was to come over the next four hours.

Singh was wild off the tee at times, but made a handful of shots over and around trees. His first drive landed in the 10th fairway, but unfazed by his blind shot over trees, Singh scrambled well enough to start with a birdie.

And Daly did, too.

Daly made an eagle from 142 yards at the par-4 No. 2, causing the crowd to erupt with applause as he pulled into a tie at 19 under.

He took the lead with a birdie on the third hole and kept a one-shot lead until Singh's birdie at No. 12 knotted them up at 22 under.

Singh went ahead by a shot with a birdie at 14—to reach 23 under—and was able to maintain a one-shot edge the rest of the way.

He got into trouble on the final hole, but his second shot out of the rough landed on the green close enough to set up two-putt, which was just enough to win because Daly missed a makable par putt.

## Lions sign first-round pick Roy Williams



**A L L E N PARK, Mich.** (AP)—Receiver Roy Williams agreed to a five-

year contract with the Detroit Lions on Sunday.

The seventh overall pick in the draft out of Texas, Williams was the lone Lions player who did not report when the team began training camp Friday. He remained in the area while the deal was being negotiated, however, and arrived at camp Sunday afternoon.

He spent the remainder of the day in orientation meetings and video sessions.

"We were able to get this done in about 48 hours," Detroit chief operating officer Tom Lewand said. "We're happy we were able to get it done and get it done quickly."

Williams will be in uniform Monday when the Lions resume practice.

Terms of the contract were not disclosed but the five-year deal is a year shorter than those given to quarterback Joey Harrington and receiver Charles Rogers, the top picks in the 2002 and '03 drafts, respectively. Harrington was taken third overall, while Rogers was the second overall selection.

Williams caught 70 passes for 1,079 yards and nine touchdowns as a senior at Texas last season. He finished his career with 241 catches, 3,866 yards and 36 touchdowns, all of which were school records.

The team hopes he and Rogers can team to give Harrington a tall and speedy receiving tandem to help spark a club that has compiled the NFL's worst record in the last three seasons.

# Brown wants to move past suspensions

By ROY KAMMERER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**COLOGNE, Germany** (AP)—Larry Brown wants to move on. The U.S. Olympic basketball coach said Sunday that the suspension of Allen Iverson, LeBron James and Amare Stoudemire is forgotten. He would rather focus on a tough road trip against some of Europe's top teams leading up the Athens Olympics.

Brown refused to let Iverson, James and Stoudemire play in the team's 96-71 win over Puerto Rico on Saturday, punishment for the trio showing up late for a team meeting.

"It won't happen again. They'll play the next game and some will start," Brown said.

The U.S. squad arrived in Germany on Sunday, shook off the jet lag and held its first practice.

And Brown is having some second thoughts about whether this series of exhibitions, which includes a game against world champion Serbia and Montenegro, is ideal for his team.

That's a switch from last year, when he was eager for the trip after the U.S. team romped through Olympic qualifying in Puerto Rico with a 10-0 record. Since then, however, veterans from that team, including Mike Bibby, Tracy McGrady and Ray Allen, have bailed out.

Now, Brown is drilling the youngest U.S. Olympic team, with an average age of 23.6 years, since NBA players were first allowed into the 1992 Games.



James, Dwyane Wade and Carmelo Anthony may be talented, but they are newcomers to basketball abroad. The team played together just one week, and many players will need a crash course in the different rules of the international game.

Brown thought the team had put all that behind them in Puerto Rico.

"We thought that team would be playing. We thought we had laid the foundation," Brown said. "Now I think maybe we can use the practice."

The U.S. team faces Italy on Tuesday, followed by Germany and Dirk Nowitzki on Wednesday. Then it plays two more away games against Serbia and Montenegro and Turkey, whose NBA players include Utah's Mehmet Okur.

"I hope this trip will competitively toughen us up," Brown said.

Sunday's practice, during which Brown worked on some plays, was a closed session in a sweltering small gym. Only a handful of reporters were let in to watch a late shootaround and talk to the players.

That will be different against Italy and Germany. The NBA stars, often still called "The Dream Team" abroad, have awakened huge interest.

From across the world, the

German organizers of the exhibition game said more than 500 media sought accreditation for the two games, with around 350 gaining approval. That's about a 100 more than followed the U.S. team's training camp in Jacksonville.

While handling the growing hoopla, Brown will have to get his young team used to the international game's wider lanes, the different calls from referees, the shortened 3-point line, along with schooling them in some simple plays.

All that will be needed to offset the American's disadvantage, which proved so costly at the world championships in Indianapolis, where it was beaten three times and finished sixth.

While the U.S. squad has three short weeks to forge a cohesive team, other world powers like Argentina and Serbia and Montenegro have players who have been on the court together for years.

Not that the Americans and their young stars are worried.

Anthony has already boldly predicted a gold medal, while James said he isn't concerned about upholding the American's 24-0 mark since NBA players were allowed in the Olympics.

"There's no pressure at all," James said. "If we get better and do our job, we have a great chance of accomplishing our goals."

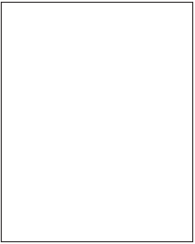
U.S. coach Larry Brown, right, sends in a play with guard Stephon Marbury during an Olympic tuneup against Puerto Rico, Saturday, July 31, 2004, in Jacksonville, Fla. The U.S. team won 96-71.







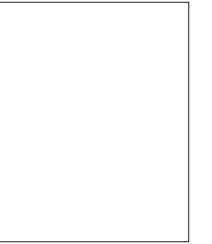




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